

Fairgrounds Citizen Advisory Committee Minutes of the February 3, 2005 Meeting

ATTENDANCE:

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| Delane Adams | Commission Aide |
| Elaine Bryant | Capital City Chamber |
| Sue Dick | Economic Development Council |
| Debbie Dowler | North Florida Fair Association |
| Wendy Grey | in assoc. with Strategic Planning Group, Inc. |
| John Lawrence | Housing Finance Authority |
| Ben Koenig | Leon County School Board |
| Ben Pingree | County Administration |
| Bill Proctor | Commissioner, PSCC Chairman |
| Kurt Salsburg | Tallahassee Community College |
| Andrea Simpson | County Administration |

Meeting came to order at 12:10 P.M.

ISSUES REVIEWED:

Three Objectives of Meeting: Commissioner Proctor explained that the three objective of the meeting were:

- I.) Reaction to the Consultant's Report and Options.
- II.) Set meeting with the Fair Association and receive their reaction to the report.
- III.) Draft a position or statement that the CAC would want the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to consider during February 22, 2005 Workshop.

- I. Consultant's Report** – Kurt Salsburg asked if the Fair Association has considered any alternative sites for the fairgrounds. He stated that the County needs to find property for the fairgrounds relocation before they can move forward.

Debbie Dowler stated that the Fair Association is in a "holding pattern" and is waiting to hear from the County regarding proposals for relocation. The Fair Board would like to have a decision made, and time line for relocation established.

John Lawrence referred to the Consultant's report and the state \$7 million necessary to "make the Fair Association whole." The property value of the fairgrounds is currently estimated at \$5-6 million. This figure does not include a land cost.

Wendy Grey stated that the relocation of the fairgrounds was outside the scope of the consultant's contract.

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There was consensus of the Citizens Advisory Committee that the fairgrounds need to be relocated.

Debbie Dowler stated that the Fair Association was not in the position to search for an alternative site.

Motion (by Kurt Salsburg, duly seconded): The CAC recommends that the County, in collaboration with the Fair Association, search for an alternative site for the fairgrounds. The motion passed 6-0.

Elaine Bryant stated that the CAC needs to weigh in on the feasibility of the options presented in the Consultant's report. Regarding page 42 of the draft report; **Scenario #1- Fairgrounds remain unchanged in terms of its use. Envisioned as a "holding scenario" until the market can support a complete redevelopment, and the Fairgrounds can be relocated to an alternative site.** Ms. Bryant does not see this is a feasible option.

Motion (by Kurt Salsburg, seconded by John Lawrence): The CAC does not support scenario #1 as a feasible option and asks that the Consultant's provided the CAC's opinion on this scenario into the final report. The motion passed 6-0.

Debbie Dowler reported that the Fair Board rejected Scenarios #2 and #3:

Scenario #2 – *The Fairgrounds would remain at its current location and the property would support commercial development along S. Monroe and Tram Roads. About 15-20 acres would be dedicated to commercial development.*

Scenario #3 – *The Fairgrounds would remain at its current location but would be forced to operate on a smaller land area. This scenario shows about 15 – 20 acres of commercial development along South Monroe and Tram Road, and about 20 acres of residential development along Zillah Road.*

Ms. Dowler explained that the Fair Association would suffer with these two options due to the loss of visibility and access on South Monroe.

Commissioner Proctor stated that we need to be cautious not to "part and parcel" the property, but rather, pursue a holistic approach to redevelopment.

Motion (by Kurt Salsburg, seconded by Elaine Bryant): The CAC supports the Fair Association's position of rejecting scenarios #2 and #3 and would rather see a holistic approach to the redevelopment of the Fairgrounds. The motion passed 6-0.

Wendy Grey explained that the recommendation of the consultant is **Scenario #4** – *This scenario envisions a complete redevelopment of the 104 – acre property*

and the relocation of the Fairgrounds activities to a site not yet determined. The property would contain a mix of commercial and residential uses. Based on market analysis, this scenario may not be feasible for approximately 8 – 10 years based on current trends. The point of contention regarding this scenario is the timeline for redevelopment.

Commissioner Proctor stated he did not agree with the statement: *“Based on market analysis, this scenario may not be feasible for approximately 8 – 10 years based on current trends,* and asked Wendy Grey if this statement could be deleted from the report. Wendy responded that it could not.

Ben Koenig referenced page 52 of the Draft which offers short term actions that could be taken to position the Fairgrounds property for development:

- *Identification and acquisition of an alternative site for the North Florida Fair,*
- *A program to reduce the incidence of crime and enhance the image of the local Southside area,*
- *Accelerate road improvement programs for Paul Russell and Tram Roads, and*
- *General landscape upgrading of subject parcels.*

Commissioner Proctor stated the FAMU student population is excluded from the market analysis. Wendy Grey will ask the Consultants to look into this and address it in the final report.

Commissioner Proctor also asked that the consultant also evaluate the number of permits in the “pipeline” since he’s done the market analysis. Also, a market study needs to be completed based on developer interest in the project.

Wendy Grey stated it would be beneficial to analyze the road infrastructure improvements going on in the area.

Sue Dick recommended the addition of language in the report highlighting how market place and local economy has been improving in the last few years. Ms. Dick further recommended that an RFP could be submitted to perform market studies to gauge developer interest and consumer interest in Scenario #4 occurring at the Fairgrounds site.

Wendy Grey stated that it seems the position of the CAC is to support Scenario #4 and that the timeline for redevelopment should be sooner than 8 – 10 years.

The primary concern of the CAC is finding site relocation for the Fairgrounds within 1 – 3 years. This will allow the Fair Association to make plans for

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temporary improvements and investments on the current property.

- II. **Meeting with the Fair Association** – Due to time constraints, a meeting between the CAC and Fair Association should take place after the February 22, 2005 Board Workshop.
- III. **Letter of Commitment from Fair Association** – It was determined that a letter from the Fair Association Board, restating their commitment to relocation, and redevelopment of the Fairgrounds was necessary for inclusion in the February 22, 2005 Board Workshop discussion.
Debbie Dowler will submit this letter to the Board and to staff before the workshop.
- IV. **Other Discussion** – Wendy Grey will submit the Final Report, with changes discussed today, to staff by February 11, 2005. Staff will distribute to the CAC for review and, if necessary, establish a CAC meeting prior to February 17, 2005.

Sue Dick stated that it would be nice to research other Request for Proposals (RFPs) that are being submitted in the community in the near future, and if the Board decides to RFP the issue of Fairgrounds Redevelopment, they could explore collaboration with other projects issuing RFPs.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 P.M.